BOOKS AUTHORS & PUBLISHERS

LITERARY CRITICISM AND BOOK NEWS

Regency Kitkats and Victorian Vignettes—Trireme to Clipper Ship: A Book of the Sea —King Edward and His Chauffeur.

WINSOME ESSAYS.

DANDIES AND MEN OF LETTERS. By Léon H. Vincent. With illustrations. 8vo, pp. xi, 314. The Houghton Mifflin Company.

Out of his own mouth we will try him. Says this writer of the "Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of His Life," first published in 1830: "There are fifteen hundred pages in the work (lacking just seven), and were there any less it would be a great pity." In "Dandies and Men of Letters" there are three hundred and fourteen (handsomely printed) pages; and were there any less it would be a great pity. "Viscount Montjoy," says our writer, "was a very agreeable fellow;" and so, 'pon our soul! is our writer, an uncommonly likable sort. "For quotable lines, clever and unexpected turns, ingenious parallels, amusing episodes and descriptions," he says, "there are few pieces that can match 'The Fudge Family in Paris.'" Upon his own book our comment is even the same. His heroes, "like certain inns mentioned by Baedeker," have been "variously spoken of." But not often so winsomely as here. The species "beau" forms a department of natural history which amuses and delights him. Examples of the breed are a glory which is gone. There is, of course, no place for a Brummell or a D'Orsay in the society of the present time. But sixty and a hundred years ago there was a place for these "magnificent performers of life's commonplaces," as Mrs. Ritchie happily calls them. These dashing gentlemen, "the bedazzlement of all beholders," the radiant bucks and dandies of the Regency and the earliest Victorian period, who flourished in that region "once so popular, so gaudy, so much frequented and desired," were "entertaining and instructive facts." There is a good sory, a drama, perhaps, in the life of each. "A Regency dandy of the first class was the direct opposite of a fool." Whatever relates to them is a part of the perfect picture of the social life of their times. And it was a funny age.

Mr. Vincent is an essayist with much of the quality of Mr. Birrell. He is a bookish man and he speaks to bookish people. He is a learned bibliophile, with a touch (as he says of the charming Lady Clarinda in Peacock's novel, "Crotchet Castle") "delicate, roguish, witty in the extreme." "The dear thing can talk." His points he has "collared" from old and often rare books. His biographical sketches are frankly (and charmingly) affectionate and admiring. He does not go around in carpet slippers, as he says was the obsequious eighteenth century manner, speaking in hushed tones lest he disturb the great man whose memoirs he is compiling; nor has he anything of the so familiar modern manner in which "you are expected to be quite firm with your hero, even though you admire him." "Extreme severity," as he brightly says, "is sometimes termed giving a fresh estimate of his genius." He is of the genus amiable.

These papers are concerned with dandies pure and unalloyed; with men of letters of the early nineteenth century who sometimes essayed the role of dandy, or who, like Byron, had a "tinge of dandyism" in his youth, and retained enough of it, as he said, "to conciliate the great ones;" and with some quaint ones who were rather more what is commonly known as "characters" than were dandies at all. The author has a happy turn for titles which hit off his essays. Among his headings are: "The Celebrated Mr. Brummell," "Episodes in the Life of a Noble Poet (Lord Byron)," "A Giver of Breakfasts (Samuel Rogers)," "A Regency Satirist (Thomas Moore)," "A Virtuoso of the Old School (Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe)," "The Adventures of a Gentleman' (Bulwer-Lytton)," and "A Successful Batchelor (Henry Crabb Robinson)." Those who have, as the phrase goes, "been there," will recognize the truth of this:

> We who read the novels of to-day for pleasure, and the romances of yesterday from a sense of duty, often meet with strange surprises. That the fame of "The Old English Baron," "The Castle of Otranto" and "Vathek" cannot be laid to a conspiracy of professors of literature we know perfectly well. Nevertheless, we assume that those queer tales only interest those whom they interest, and that we ourselves are not of that number. Hardy, Barrie, Meredith, Phillpotts and Hewlett are for us, not Walpole, Beckford and Miss Clara Reeve. The surprise comes when we find that any one of the old romances, by any one of a dozen authors who might be named, is indeed for us, sophisticated moderns though we be, and devotees of the romantic-realism of our time.

In the matter of inveigling us into active interest again in "those queer tales," a more ingratiating writer than Mr. Vincent would be hard to find.

Two of the mots of George Bryan Brummel, Esquire, which he gives, we must quote. Replying to a friend who had asked him why he was limping, Brummell explained that he had hurt his leg, and the worst of it was "it was his favorite leg." To the inquiry of a neighbor at table: "Do you not eat vegetables, Mr. Brummell?" the reply was, "Yes, madame, I once ate a pea." The writer's paper on the "noble poet" is largely devoted to laying "the spectre of a misanthropic and piratical Byron, of which we have had rather too much for our comfort." He finds much in the "episodes" of the young lord to admire and to be cheerful about. As the elder Mr. Weller sagaciously remarked of a bouncing maid servant, "a wery pleasant and comfortable" book.

OLD SEA DAYS

The Story of the Activities of Our Forefathers on the Sea.

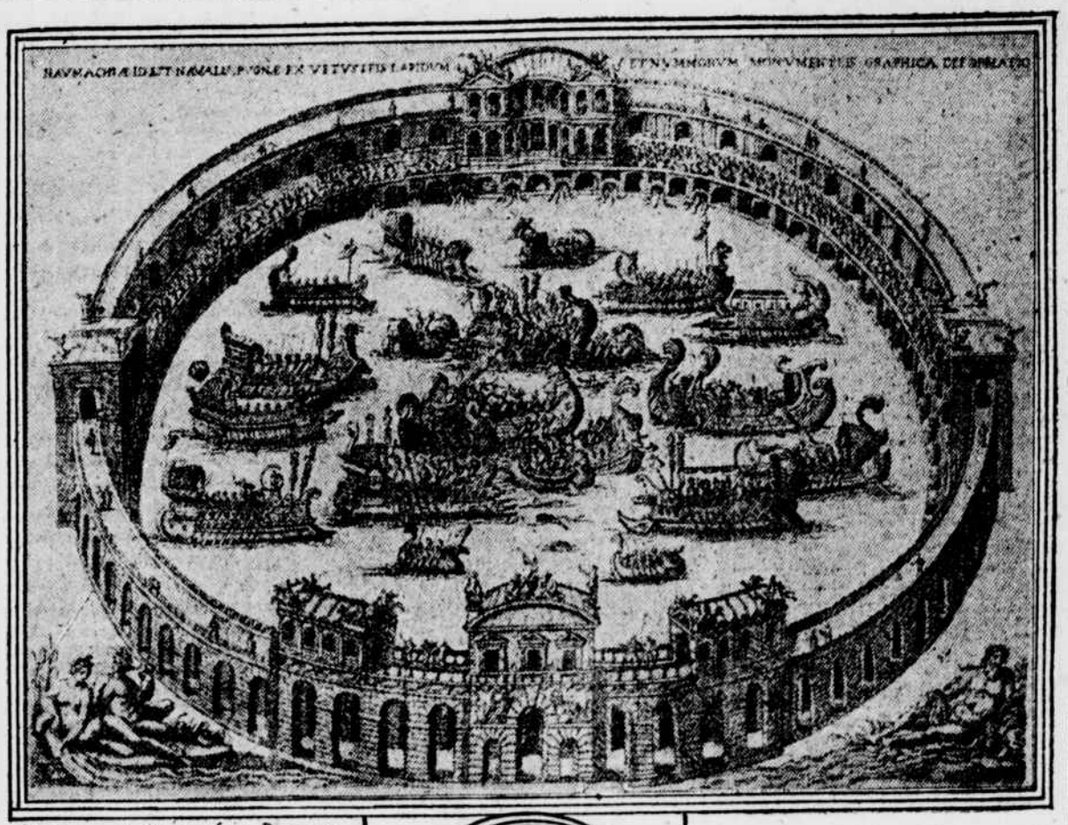
SHIPS AND WAYS OF OTHER DAYS. By E. Keble Chatterton. With 130 illustrations. Royal 8vo, pp. xvi. 308. Philadelphia: The J. B. Lippincott Company.

> The art of masts, sail-crowded, fit to break,
> Yet stayed to strength, and back-stayed into rake,
> The life demanded by that art, the keen,
> Eye-puckered, hard-case seamen, silent, lean,
> They are grander things than all the art of towns,
> Their tests are tempests and the sea that drowns.

This, the romance of the olden sea, is this writer's story. And in this our day of "steamanship" we must fare in the hardy ways of the sea mostly in books. Mr. Chatterton has made himself something like the standard historian of the sailing ship. He is a writer both popular and exact. His "Sailing Ships and Their Story" won its way into the library of the yachtsman and into the hearts of all who chanced to fall upon it gifted with an atom of imagination and any desire for knowledge. In that volume he traced the evolution of the ship from the very earliest times of which there exist any historical data down to the canvas setting craft of to-day. His book "Fore and Aft" was of a somewhat technical nature.

In this handsome new volume of his he presents chronologically the characteristics, the customs and the manifold activities of our forefathers on the sea; a story irresistible in its appeal. From the way in which Cæsar worked his tides crossing the English Channel when about to invade Britain in 55 B. C., or the way William the Conqueror a thousand years later wrestled with the same problem, but in different ships, he brings us down to the dawn and rise of the navigational science which to-day enables our biggest ships to make passages across the ocean with the regularity of the train. And no finer example could be afforded of the persistency of human endeavor to overcome great obstacles. He tells us how men managed to build, launch, equip and fit out different craft in all ages. We see, with him, the ships afloat, and watch them spread sail, bid farewell to harbor, and set forth on their long voyages to wage war or to discover, to open up trade routes or to fight the Crusade. We note how these various craft were handled in the centuries of history; how they were steered; how they furled and set sail; how these ships behaved in a storm, and how they fought the ships of other nations and pirates. And we obtain an intimate picture of the life lived on board.

On those Viking ships, for example, which were scarcely decked at all, how did the crew manage to eat and sleep? This is just the sort of a question answered here. We learn what the captain said of his ship, his yarns about gales o' wind, and what was the average return to the owner from the ship's cargo. Some fine old sea songs are given in the book. And the author is rich in citations from old chronicles of seafaring, and from treatises, handbooks and manuals on the seaman's art, which contain many an entertaining detail of early sea life. He has culled many remarkably interesting data from old manuscripts which illustrate the experiences of ships and men of other days. He is as alluring in his treatment of the evolution of nautical inventions, as when he dwells on the "hard-swearing, bullying days of Queen Anne," the "golden days of the privateer" and the "period of the clipper," which "simultaneously brought seamanship to unheard-of attainment, and chanted its swan song." His chapter headings are "The Birth of the Nautical Arts," "The Development of the Marine Instinct," "Mediterranean Progress," "Rome and the Sea," "The Viking Mariners," "Seamanship and Navigation in the Middle Ages," "The Period of Columbus," "The Early Tudor Period," "The Elizabethan Age," concluding with three chapters on the seventeenth, the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. A valuable feature of the book is the numerous illustrations, which include drawings reproduced from old manuscripts, plans of early ships, ancient charts and exceedingly quaint old prints, together with photographs of historic ships' instruments and many well-drawn modern illustrations.



Representation of a Roman Nanmachia.
(Ships & Ways of other Days) p. 6

AN ATTRACTIVE KING

King Edward VII as Seen by His Motor Expert.

KING EDWARD AS I KNEW HIM. Reminiscences of Five Years' Personal Attendance Upon His Late Majesty King Edward the Seventh. By C. W. Stamper. With frontispiece. 8vo, pp. v, 246. Dodd, Mead & Co.

The late King Edward's motor expert and engineer is a very fair sort of a photographer. He has not a turn for "art photographs," and he gives us just an ordinary "cabinet" sized picture of the royal family which he served. And the people in his picture look most remarkably like just ordinary nice people in a mediocre photograph. It is obviously a truthful account of the rather humdrum part of the life of a modern gentleman engaged in the king business. The effort to touch things up a bit here and there is very naïve.

The writer entered the King's service in 1905, and was constantly in attendance upon his majesty for five years. His business was to be in charge, as an expert, of the royal cars. He did not drive them, but so often as his majesty went driving—which was practically every day—he sat in front by the side of the constable, driven from the Metropolitan Police, driving. The King had four cars in regular use, he tells us. "Except for the small one, they carried no number plates, but each car bore the royal arms on its door panels and at the back of the body the royal crown surmounting the lion within the garter. The small car was used for town work and nothing else, and, to avoid attracting attention, bore merely a number and an unobtrusive crown. The King's motor equipage was entirely without pomp, but "smart, up-to-date and well turned out." His majesty this motor expert found an employer "at once good-natured and dignified, kind and appreciative to a degree, strict, but not stern; scrupulously fair, often quick tempered, though his anger had gone almost before it was there; never unreasonable, but always ready to hear an explanation." This gentleman, continually smoking large black cigars, when meeting his motor engineer off duty, always raised his hat, "taking it right off his head," whether at home or abroad. Cæsar invariably accompanied his master in the car. "A very nice dog," says the writer; "he was always friendly to me." Cæsar, indeed, is a prominent and very engaging figure in this story. "He would never remain on the floor of the car, for he loved to look out of the window all the time. If we swung around a corner at high speed, when Cæsar was perched on one of the auxiliary seats, he was pretty certain to lose his balance and tumble off on the floor. His frantic efforts to retain his seat upon such occasions were most ludicrous, and I have often heard his majesty laughing to see him."

So it is, with minute detail, that the writer chronicles the fairly uneventful daily runs of the King. The car was never stopped by the police for exceeding the speed limit, but was stopped several times because it had no number. One time, in jumping a culvert, the King had the crown of his hat crushed in. On another occasion his car was stuck in a snowdrift. And we learn about a predicament occasioned by a broken lever. Once Cæsar became so fidgety that Mr. Stamper "simply had to smack him." At which the King cried out: "Don't! You hurt him!" The King talked a good deal to Cæsar, calling him affectionately, "You bad, bad dog." The writer never saw the King depressed, and he gives numerous pleasant examples of his humor. Thus he pictures his majesty on occasions when annoyed:

> He would show his displeasure by assuming an air of the most complete resignation. Instead perhaps of upbraiding me, if I lost the way, he would question me quietly, so as to ascertain what was wrong, gravely deplore the way in which misfortune singled him out for her victim, and then settle himself gently in his corner, as if resigning himself to his fate. In his countenance there was written a placid acceptance of the situation and a calm expectancy of worse to come. The listless way in which he heard my apologies was inimitable. Of such gentle irony the King was a master. At these times I was naturally too much occupied to do more than mark his majesty's demeanor, but, so exquisite was the pose he affected, that his gentlemen were often hard put to it not to smile, while sometimes the King would end by laughing in spite of himself.

The anecdote depicting the situation when on a day all of the King's men had been eating of his majesty's pungent enemy, onions, is highly amusing. Altogether, this is a book of considerable "human interest."

Thomas Hope.
(One of Mr Vincent's Oddities)

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Current Talk of Things Past, Present and to Come—The Country of "The Ring and the Book"—Compton MacKenzie on Women's Novels.

Many careful details of the tragedy described in Browning's poem "The Ring and the Book" are set forth in Sir Frederick Treves's illustrated volume entitled "The Country of 'The Ring and the Book.'" The story of the flight of Pompilia from one posting station to another along the road is minutely given. The entry of Pompilia's marriage has been discovered, showing that instead of this having been secret, as generally supposed, it took place after publication of the banns and other formalities.

Women's Novels.

Mr. Compton MacKenzie, a British novelist, does not think much of the work of feminine members of his craft. "No female writer," he declares, "has ever created a man that was credible apart from his outside." He may be left to the mercies of the ladies vexed by his assertion; but the impartial admirer of Jane Austen's books, for example, might justly ask Mr. MacKenzie "How about the inimitable Mr. Woodhouse (to mention but a single character), in the novel entitled 'Emma'?"

A Literary Skater.

Mr. E. F. Benson, the author of "Dodo," is about to publish a book which has nothing to do with fiction. It is an engaging account of "Winter Sports in Switzerland," drawn from the experience of an ardent sportsman. Mr. Benson is mentioned as an authority on skating and a very fine skater himself.

Musical Reminiscences.

The venerable musician Wilhelm Ganz has written out his reminiscences, which cover a period of sixty-four years. Mr. Ganz has known all the musical celebrities of his time, and his book should be full of entertainment.

English Books on Art.

Among forthcoming books on art are Mr. James Ward's "History and Methods of Ancient and Modern Painting," Mr. Laurence Binyon's "Art of Botticelli"—an effort to "discover what the art of a Florentine of the Quattrocento means for us to-day and for our own art"—and Mr. R. D. Morton's "Painting in East and West"—a work written from the point of view that the chief need of Western painting is spirituality.

A Veteran's Novel.

Miss Braddon (Mrs. Maxwell) is now, at the age of seventy-six, preparing to publish her sixty-sixth novel. It is to be entitled "Miranda." The author's son, Mr. W. B. Maxwell, promises to put as many books to his credit as has his mother, for he is apparently writing continuously.

How Dreadful!

A person named Alan Raleigh who has a very bad opinion of this country has relieved his pent-up disgust in a volume published in London and entitled "The Real America." It is described as a work animated by a spirit of undiscriminating dislike and fault-finding. "What America needs above all else," says Mr. Raleigh, "is to be told the real estimate in which she is held in the world. A nation cannot thrive and grow strong on fulsome adulation."

Eugène.

It is not easy to feel much enthusiasm about Eugène de Beauharnais, who was an amiable, mediocre fellow, whose unassisted qualities of mind and character would hardly have brought him into high place. He had singular good luck—especially in a wife, that kind and gentle daughter of a royal line, who gave him safety when his great stepfather's star sank below the horizon. The man's career is described in a forthcoming volume by Violette Montagu, a memoir which bears the title of "Eugène de Beauharnais, the Adopted Son of Napoleon."

Religion in Italy.

Lectures delivered last autumn at Princeton Theological Seminary and other divinity schools in America form the substance of Professor Luzzi's book, "The Struggle for Christian Truth in Italy" (Fleming H. Revell Company). The opening chapters are given to the dawn of Christianity in Rome, the reaction upon religion of the Renaissance in Italy, the implications of the Protestant revolution, and the dramatic story of Bible translation from St. Jerome to the modern Pia Societa di San Girolamo, whose circulation of the Gospels through the Vatican printing press had reached 880,000 copies in 1907. The author's real preoccupation is with the Waldenses, the "Israel of the Alps," and with the witness for spiritual independence which marked the evangelical revival in Italy in the first half of the nineteenth century. In considering the contribution to Italian Protestantism made by the exiled patriots of that period Dr. Luzzi gives prominence to the career and the writings of Gabriele Rossetti, who, if he composed what became almost the official hymn of the political revolution, furnished by far the better part of the hymnology of the modern evangelical church in Italy. The present effort for reform within the Roman Church, the Modernist movement as it manifests itself in Italian circles, is described with sympathy and animation.

Spanish Islam.

Reinhart Dozy's "Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne" has at last been translated, and the English edition appears under the title of "Spanish Islam: A History of the Moslems of Spain."

AMONG THE NEW NOVELS

Suburban "Uplift" with Humor—The Path of Life and Modern Labyrinths—Once Upon a Time, a Maid and a Fool—Elinor Glyn's Latest.

A GAY REFORMER.

THE MIXING. What the Hillport Neighbors Did. By Bouck White. Illustrated with decorative designs. 12mo. pp. 344. Doubleday, Page & Co.

To clothe with mirth and gayety a hypothetical solution of the "rural problem" is the business of "The Mixing." It is a funny book, whether you live in Hillport or not. If you are one of the neighbors of Hillport, possibly it will be inspiring as well. Hillport is anywhere within commuting distance from the City. The particular Hillport of this exuberant story was in a bad way. We discover Mr. Dagner, minister of the village church, sitting on a lonely rock overlooking the town and reflecting in a despondent vein upon the situation. There is no community life here. The native villagers and the commuter colony are at odds. The "Harum-Scarum Club" is leading the young men to the dogs. The outlying districts of Shantytown and Dogtown are dark holes. He has found all the people refractory to his efforts. As a last resort he had imported a singing evangelist, who in a two weeks' "campaign" had employed the very latest advertising dodges, and who prided himself on being a press agent expert. But the people had not responded. What was the solution to the rural problem?

How the Hillport Neighborhood Association was launched, and what it accomplished, is the story, told with infectious high spirits. The rustic satire of the "Cracker Barrells" down at Bassler's store upon this movement with an "uplift" squint about it is highly amusing. Their comments on the "anteeks," the "'Shippen—Shippendales,' that's what they called 'em," acquired from their households and sold at the fair to raise money for the work of the association, is salt humor. After the establishment in turn of all these things—a co-operative library, public baths, a "New Idea" in local politics, the Hillport Junior Civic League, a tag day, an Easter festival, a Camera Club, a safe and sane Fourth, a kindergarten, a twenty-five dollar prize for "residence improvement," a scientific campaign against infection and against roadside billboards, the diminishing of Mr. Bassler's sales of "Specifics," and the change in name of the Hillport "Globe" to "The Rose"—the story winds up with a rousing Old Home Week. Even the "Cracker Barrells" have become converted, and the Neighborhood Association has become the organized conscience and brain of the town. There is a bit of love in the story, and a tragic moment.

AN IMPRESSIVE NOVEL.

THE MAIN ROAD. By Maude Radford Warren. Frontispiece. 12mo, pp. 391 Harper & Bros.

This is a well told and an interesting story, packed with keen observation and sound sense. Indeed, in the matter of worldly wisdom this writer suggests a relationship, somewhat distant, it is true, to the author of "The Way of All Flesh." Let us say that she is a literary great-granddaughter, and as such not unworthy, of Samuel Butler. Janet of this story, whose sheltered childhood and youth brought her into young womanhood wholly untutored in life, fed as a girl much upon novels. "Nobody told her that novels are false in their effect—at least, for the mind of a young girl; that they do not exhibit the real proportions of life." The impressive thing about "The Main Road" exactly is that it does very effectively exhibit the real proportions of life. Nearly all of the "movements" just now in the air enter into the story, which is the process of Janet's tutoring. In a little prairie town in Wisconsin she begins her journey, "a vivid, repressed, darkling elf," living in a land of dreams. Her ineffective family, like all of the people in the book, is very real. Janet, a "shimmering vessel of emotion," goes to high school, and later to the University of Chicago. Modern methods of education are keenly scrutinized and academic circles portrayed with an intimate and interesting touch. Janet awaits the ideal lover of her dreams who must come to her. Those at hand are all found wanting. "She did not know that the happiest marriages are built on calculated sacrifices and abnegations. To her life was spontaneous love." She was destined to go through most of the important phases in the love of man and woman, and "it was not till after many years that she lost that youthful fallacy, which some women never abandon at any age, of trying to inspire a man, of assuming that under the stimulation of feminine belief and encouragement he can accomplish everything."

Janet's successive suitors; Grace Ryder, rich, fashionable, beautiful, charming, and unhappily wedded; her husband, a dominant modern man of business; Sallie Keyes, delightfully "Southern" at first, who comes to a tragic end; the social secretary, Ada Sargent, and many others are deeply interesting characters, quite representative of various phases of modern life. The study of the communist settlement in which Janet sojourns, composed of reformers, artists, writers, makers of bizarre jewelry, believers in endowed motherhood, and so on, is a fine piece of work. There is a dramatic industrial strike. And Janet for a time totters on the brink of missing the main road; then the light breaks and she beholds that it is not bigness that is above the law, but weakness that cannot keep the law, and she finds in the end that which is the best thing Nature has designed for man and woman.

GRACEFUL FOOLING.

FATIMA. Or, Always Pick a Fool for Your Husband. Being the Strange Adventures of a Woman Who Was the Most Beautiful Creature and Quite Quite the Cleverest Creature Ever Was, and Knew It. By Rowland Thomas. With illustrations in color by J. Duncan Gleeson. 12mo, pp. vi, 353. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

The art of graceful literary fooling, occasionally practised with such consummate skill by Mr. Max Beerbohm in England, has not many practitioners in this country. This fanciful tale is a very engaging thing of that nature. Fatima was an Egyptian maiden, hardly turned sixteen, "and was very softly dark of eye, and satiny of skin, and plumply slender in the enticing fausse maigre way of girls, and gazelle-ly straight and graceful." She lived in that most romantic of periods in story "once upon a time," in a little dura-thatched village called Ashmunein, where also dwelt a Fool, who "hadn't a brain in his head." Lived here, too, one Sheikh Omar, who sought her in marriage. But he was an oldish, whisker-ish, fattish thing. So Fatima sought counsel of the image of the god Thout, who used to be the very wisest person in wise old Egypt; and he, a very down-to-date image, sent her a telepath. It came to pass then that Fatima married the fool; but with him she was not happy, for, as she said: "I have spoiled a good fool and have not made a husband of him." Now Fatima was a saucy chit and as witty as she was beautiful. How she journeyed to Mecca, made fools of many wise men, attended the University, became a great lady in the harem of my lord the